

Policy Checklist

Flexible Work Options

Adapted from: <http://www.flexibility.co.uk/flexwork/general/hr5.htm>

Whilst it is not possible to be prescriptive, the following notes should help HR managers develop personnel policies that are appropriate for different forms of flexible working.

It should be noted that these guidelines are most relevant during the piloting and transition phase, when different forms of flexible working are being evaluated and some staff are still working conventionally. The policies can be simplified if the whole organization adopts flexible work options.

Policy checklist:

Contracts of employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there conditions in employment contracts which are no longer relevant, e.g. specifying the place and hours of work, specifying a requirement to be able to drive, etc? Take care not to attempt to change contracts of employment unilaterally. • Do travel-related benefits need reviewing? • Other than where people are to work mainly from home, only visiting an office occasionally, the stated place of work should generally remain the office.
Standard practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will this be part of normal working practice, where all staff normally be expected to work flexibly as job responsibilities demand? This may mean occasionally working in a different location or to non-standard working hours. • What will can be provided to minimize any domestic impact of this requirement?
Working time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there core hours, when all staff are expected to be available for work unless sick, on leave or otherwise absent, e.g. 10.00am to 4.00pm Monday to Friday? • What are the office hours, when office services and staff access for work are available? • When is attendance required at the office, if at all, for example at least during core hours 2 days per week? • How are actual times at the office agreed in advance? (this is important not only for managers and colleagues but also for desk management)? • What are minimum and maximum working times, for example minimum of full contracted hours each month, maximum of 48 hours per week? • What rights do line managers have to require attendance at the office on specific days and at specific times, what notice do they need to give? • Are timesheets required, showing location of work, days taken as annual leave, sickness and other absences? What are the submission and approval mechanisms?
Leaves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will holidays and vacations time be tracked by the day or by the hour? • How will bereavement leave, jury duty and other types of leave be handled?
Working location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where are staff expected to work when not in the office, for example at home, at a client's site, in a telecentre, etc.? • Should staff working away from the office be at all times accessible by phone and e-mail?

Health and safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are risk assessments carried out? • What are the respective responsibilities of the employer and employee? • Are certain types of work or activities not allowed in certain locations, for example using a phone whilst driving, using hazardous equipment at home, having business meetings at home?
Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify who is eligible for flexible working, and indicate why this is fair. • Are there other forms of flexibility that may be available for a wider group of staff, e.g. flexitime only?
Variations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify who is authorized to vary policies and what the processes are.
Occasional/temporary arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the arrangements for approving occasional or temporary variations to normal working practices?
Termination of arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the process to suspend flexible working arrangements and to return to conventional arrangements - either by managers where business requirements and/or performance warrant this or by individuals' circumstances where flexible working may no longer be suitable?
Provision of facilities in the office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the employer provide a permanent office desk for every staff member, especially where work patterns warrant shared facilities and office space?
Provision of facilities at home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will the employer provide, or subsidize the costs of, equipment to allow staff to work effectively and safely at their homes? • How will this equipment be installed and supported? Will the employer have right of access to the equipment?
Insurance and care of equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employees should be expected to take good care of company equipment. • Who is responsible for insurance - equipment, premises, third-party, etc.?
Confidentiality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will employees take care to protect company information? • Are there rules or guidelines regarding working in public places?
Payment of expenses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will the employer compensate staff for any additional costs associated with working flexibly? • How (if at all) will the employer benefit from any cost savings enjoyed by the employee?
Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What training is offered in flexible working, including health and safety issues? • Is this training compulsory?